

THE ADMINISTRATION OF TRANSPORTATION  
IN THE UNITED STATES ARMY

APRIL 1917 - MARCH 1942

Monograph prepared by

Mr. C. C. Wardlow

Office of the Chief of Transportation

Army Service Forces

July 1944

This monograph was prepared prior to October 1946 from documentary material then available. It is not to be considered a final report, therefore, nor has it been thoroughly edited. Reproduction has been authorized in order that the information may be made available to military schools pending the publication of the official history of the Transportation Corps.

Persons finding in this manuscript errors of fact or important omissions are requested to communicate with the Historical Branch, Office of the Chief of Transportation, and submit information which will be helpful in making appropriate corrections.

## C O N T E N T S

[ Transcriber Note: page numbers listed here do not lend themselves to web formatting but refer instead to the original document.]

Foreword. ....	page 1
Administration of Army Transportation in the United States, 1917 – 1919 .....	page 2
Administration of Army Transportation in France, 1917 – 1918 .....	page 9
Transportation Aspects of the Army Reorganization Bill of 1920 .....	page 16
Transportation under The Quartermaster General, July 1920 – March 1942 .....	page 22

## F O R E W O R D

This monograph, if it may be so termed, has been compiled with a view to providing a concise account of developments in connection with the administration of transportation in the

United States Army from the beginning of our participation in World War I to the reestablishment of an independent Transportation Service soon after we entered World War II.

Need for such a compilation has been encountered from time to time, on the part of those concerned with administration as well as those engaged in historical work. The need arises chiefly from the fact that the course of transportation administration during the last war was a devious one that no single report adequately presents, while developments during the period between the wars appear to have received no over-all treatment.



No attempt has been made at exhaustive research, or at critical-appraisal of the secondary sources used. Rather the object has been to present the material available from official or otherwise reliable documents in a manner that will show the main lines of development and the reasons therefore.

## ADMINISTRATION OF ARMY TRANSPORTATION

### IN THE UNITED STATES, 1917-19

The most complete, single source of information on this subject is the Report of the Chief of Staff,

U. S. Army, to the Secretary of War, 1919. Since this section is to so great a degree a condensation and rearrangement of material found in that report, page references have been placed in parentheses in the respective paragraphs.

When the United States entered World War I in April 1917, the Quartermaster General was responsible for the movement of troops and supplies by land and by water. The Transportation Division, W4G, included a Water Transportation Branch, which supervised overseas movements and the operation of the Army Transport Service, and a Land Transportation Branch, which supervised the movement of troops and supplies by commercial carriers within the United States. Details concerning the operation of the transports were handled by the superintendents of the Army Transport Service, who were responsible to the depot quartermasters at the respective ports. Inland traffic arrangements were made by the local quartermasters or the transportation officers of the other supply bureaus, "except where the amount of transportation required was large", in which case the arrangements were handled by the Land Transportation Branch. (pp. 110, 147, 148, 160, 161).

Under war conditions it soon became evident that stronger organizations were necessary at the ports. On June 6, 1917, the Secretary of War directed the Commanding General, Eastern Department, to exercise the functions of Commander of the Port of Embarkation, New York, until an officer had been designated to that post. A commander was assigned to the New York Port of Embarkation on July 3, 1917, and similar action was taken in respect to the Newport News Port of Embarkation on July 7, 1917. (p. 149) Thereafter the Superintendent of the Army Transport Service at those ports was responsible to the Port Commander. The authority of the Water Transportation Branch, Transportation Division, OQMG, also "was somewhat subordinate to that of the Commanding Generals of the Port". (p. 117).

The need for coordinating the movement of troops and supplies to the ports, coordinating the activities of the several ports, and coordinating the operation of the transports led to the establishment of an Embarkation Service in the General Staff on August 4, 1917. (pp. 117, 151). The order establishing this service provided: "It will have direct supervision, under the Chief of Staff, of all movements of supplies from points of



origin to ports of embarkation; will supervise the operations of the latter, and will control the employment of all Army transports engaged in the trans-Atlantic service and such commercial shipping as may be used to supplement that service".<sup>1</sup> Brigadier General Francis J. Kernan was detailed as first Chief of the Embarkation Service.

Growing congestion at the North Atlantic ports made it clear that port-bound traffic must be brought under control. The first step in that direction was taken in September 1917 when the supply bureaus were required to obtain transportation releases from the respective ports of embarkation before starting shipments. In November 1917 this regulation was changed and the issuance of transportation releases was centralized in the Embarkation Service in Washington. This control was not successful, however, because the Embarkation Service had no effective machinery for holding shipments at points of origin, and in the absence of such machinery the requirement that they obtain transportation releases often was disregarded by the shipping officers of the supply bureaus. (p. 160).

The congestion at the ports, particularly New York, had become so serious by the late fall of 1917 that additional measures were necessary. In November, the Secretary of War appointed the War Board of the Port of New York, in which he vested authority to make regulations for operating the facilities of the port, to determine priorities and to do whatever else was necessary to promote the prompt dispatch of traffic. In February 1918 the duties of the War Board passed to the Shipping Control Committee, whose authority extended to all ports. The duties of this Committee, whose personnel consisted of experienced shipping men, included the allocation of available tonnage, supervision of loading and unloading operations, arrangements for fueling, provisioning and repairing vessels, management of piers, and the control of all ships while in harbor, including ships of the War Department. (p. 152).

The Shipping Control Committee, which was appointed by the U. S. Shipping Board acting in conjunction with the War Department, carried out its functions vigorously, and in so doing took over a considerable part of the work of the Embarkation Service and the Superintendents of the Army Transport Service. It appears to have taken over also some of the Army Transport Service port personnel. Close coordination between the Committee and the Embarkation service was effected through their representatives at the respective ports. (p. 152).

The next step in the direction of greater coordination and over-all control of the Army's supply activities was the establishment of a Storage and Traffic Service in the General Staff in December 1917. (p.118). The new service was to have general oversight of the transportation of troops and supplies, both by land and sea, and the storage facilities connected therewith, and to exercise direct control incident to this service, under the Chief of Staff.<sup>2</sup> Major General George W. Goethals was appointed Director of Storage and Traffic.

The Embarkation Service, already in operation and reporting to the Chief of Staff, was transferred to the Storage and Traffic Service, and a new Inland Transportation Division



was created soon thereafter as a branch of the Storage and Traffic Service. General Goethals, who was serving also as Acting Quartermaster General, issued a directive on January 10, 1918, appointing Mr. H. M. Adams as Director of Inland Transportation, who would "take over the duties and personnel of the existing Transportation Division" of the OQMG "in so far as such duties relate to inland transportation matters".<sup>3</sup>

The establishment of the Inland Transportation Division was the result of the lack of coordination between the shipping officers of the several supply bureaus and the consequent growing congestion at the important traffic centers throughout the country. The new division was given jurisdiction over all matters relating to the inland routing and transportation of both troops and property, and all bureau chiefs, commanding officers, depot quartermasters and other officers were required to give it such assistance and information as it might require. Beginning March 1, 1918, the Embarkation Service relinquished its jurisdiction over port-bound traffic to the Inland Transportation Division, which required that all carload shipments of government freight, whether for domestic use or for movement overseas, receive its authorization before being moved. The U. S. Railroad Administration, that had taken control of the railroads in December 1917, issued instructions to the carriers not to accept shipments unless such authorization had been received. This was the beginning of effective traffic control. (pp. 161-163).

Soon the designations of the respective agencies were changed and they were known as the Division of Storage and Traffic, the Inland Traffic Service and the Embarkation Service. In April 1918 the Division of Storage and Traffic and the Division of Purchase and Supply were consolidated by the Chief of Staff, the new agency being known as the Purchase, Storage and Traffic Division of the General Staff.<sup>4</sup> General Goethals was placed in charge. The organization and functions of the Embarkation Service and the Inland Traffic Service were not affected by this consolidation, and they continued their activities as subordinate agencies of the new division. (p. 119).

By this time the Quartermaster General's functions in relation to both inland and overseas transportation had been largely absorbed by the Purchase, Storage and Traffic Division of the General Staff. In accordance with instructions from The Adjutant General dated April 22, 1916, the Acting Quartermaster General on that date transferred the Water Transport Branch to the control of the Embarkation Service; he indicated, however, that the personnel of the Water Transport Branch would be paid by the Quartermaster Corps as formerly.<sup>5</sup> On June 15, 1918, a directive of the Acting Quartermaster General stated: "The Transportation Division of the Quartermaster Corps is hereby abolished."<sup>6</sup> In October 1918 the remaining units of the Quartermaster General's office were consolidated with the Purchase and Storage Service of the Purchase, Storage and Traffic Division. (pp. 188, 195).

The Embarkation Service under Brigadier General Frank T. Hines, and the Inland Traffic Service under Mr. Adams continued as independent agencies, reporting to the Director of Purchase, Storage and Traffic, until March 1919. At that time the Director of Purchase, Storage and Traffic issued a directive reading in part: "The Embarkation Service and the Inland Traffic Service are hereby consolidated in one operating service,



which is designated as the Transportation Service". General Hines was appointed Chief of Transportation Service.<sup>7</sup> The responsibility for transportation operations having been removed from the General Staff, the Director of Purchase, Storage and Traffic established a Transportation Branch in his organization to give staff supervision to this function. (p. 212).

Shortly thereafter a unification of transportation administration in the field was decreed.<sup>8</sup> The War Department directive stated: "In all territorial department, supply zone, post, camp or other station, the personnel records and equipment of all transportation activities, except those pertaining to the Motor Transport Corps, will be consolidated into one operating service". The consolidated organization was to be known as the Transportation Section, and the officer in charge was to be designated the Transportation Officer. It was provided that the transportation officers in the supply zones would be responsible directly to the Chief of Transportation Service, War Department, for the proper administration of all transportation matters, and that he would have supervision over all transportation equipment except that pertaining to the Motor Transport Corps and the Corps of Engineers' floating equipment for river and harbor improvement.

In his report for 1920 the Chief of Transportation Service gave an explicit description of his field organization. (pp. 5 and 6) The basic unit, he stated, was the post transportation officer. This officer was detailed by the post commander at every military station and "in every tactical unit of a division or larger, both at home and abroad". His duties were those imposed upon the Transportation Service in so far as they applied to his station. The organization of the Transportation Service also provided that each territorial department commander designate, as a member of his staff, a department transportation officer, who would be responsible for the activities of the post transportation officers in his department, under regulations promulgated by the Chief of Transportation Service. Finally, there was the one transportation officer, detailed by the Chief of Transportation Service, who "was the head through which passed all matters pertaining to transportation activities at points excepted from the jurisdiction of the department commander". The zone transportation officers' jurisdiction corresponded to the eleven 'procurement zones' which had been established by the Director of Purchase and Storage, and his headquarters usually was the same as that of the zone supply officer. Within some of the zones there were sub-zones, presided over by deputy zone transportation officers.

An organization chart included in the 1919 report of the Chief of Transportation Service shows that there were then four Divisions in the Service namely, Administrative, Water Transportation, Rail Transportation and Animal Drawn Transportation. The Water Transportation Division embraced a Cargo Traffic Branch, Vessel Operation Branch and Construction, Maintenance and Repair Branch. The Rail Transportation Division consisted of a Passenger Traffic Branch, Freight Traffic Branch and Construction, Maintenance and Operation Branch. The Animal Drawn Transportation Division had a Pack Transportation Branch and a Wagon Transportation Branch.



The 1920 report of the Chief of Transportation Service disclose that an Inland Waterways and Port Terminals Division had been added during the year. The report states (p. 35) that the completion of seven new Army Bases during 1919 necessitated the establishment of a Port Terminals Branch in the Water Transport Division, which soon was linked up with inland waterways operations to form the new division. It may be noted also that among the units of the Administrative Division as shown in the 1920 report was a War Plans Branch.

## ADMINISTRATION OF ARMY TRANSPORTATION

### IN FRANCE 1917 - 18

In the American Expeditionary Forces, as in the United States, the administration of transportation was constantly in a state of flux. There being no express provision for a transportation organization in the A.E.F., railway matters were assigned temporarily to the Chief Engineer in July 1917, and port operations were charged to the Chief Quartermaster. In August 1917 the railways were transferred from the Chief Engineer to the Department of Military Railways, a unit of a newly created supply organization known as the Line of Communications.

In September 1917 a Transportation Service was created and attached to General Headquarters. The Chief of Transportation Service at first dealt only with military railways, but in December 1917 he took over supervision of the Army Transport Service at European ports. In February 1918 the Transportation Service was made part of a new supply organization known as the Services of the Rear. In March 1918, the Services of the Rear was reorganized and redesignated the Services of Supply; it included a subdivision known as the Services of Utilities, of which the component parts were the Transportation Services, Motor Transport Service, Department of Light Railways and Tolls, Department of Construction and Forestry. In July 1918, the latter two departments were turned over to the Chief Engineer while the Transportation Service and the Motor Transport Service remained as separate units in the Services of Supply. The day after the armistice was signed, the Transportation Service was redesignated and renamed the Transportation Corps.

A condensed account of the many changes which took place in connection with the administration of Army transportation in France is given in a monograph which was prepared in the War Plans Division of the General Staff in June 1921, entitled, Organization of the Services of Supply, Army Expeditionary Forces. In amplification of the above brief outline of developments, the following paragraphs are quoted from pages 91-97 of that monograph:

"In the absence of any organization, transportation (rail) was put in charge of the chief Engineer officer, and was first known as the 'Transportation Department' by General Orders, No. 8, Headquarters, Expeditionary Forces, July 5, 1917. This arrangement was only intended to hold while the commanding general, Expeditionary Forces, and his staff were making a study of the general problem of supply. The Line of Communications



became an established fact by General Orders, No. 20, general headquarters, August 13, 1917, whereby transportation was made a Department of Military Railways with a director who was a staff officer of the commanding general, Line of Communications. The Department of Military Railways was charged with the operation, maintenance, and construction of such railways as might be turned over by the French and the supervision of all movements of American troops and supplies over lines operated by the French. Construction was retained temporarily by the Engineers, until such time as enough transportation construction troops had arrived overseas to take care of the work. This arrangement was never changed and the Engineers always constructed transportation facilities, although transportation officials designed them.

Further study led the commanding general, Expeditionary Forces, to the conclusion that "rail transportation should be organized as a separate department of army field headquarters and coordinate with existing administrative and supply departments, since it occupies in this war a function apart from the Quartermaster and Engineer Corps." Acting on this conclusion, the commanding general appointed a director general of transportation by General Orders, No. 37, general headquarters, September 14, 1917, wherein the "Transportation Service" was created as a technical service of general headquarters.

Soon the burden on general headquarters became so heavy that it was determined to create a general supply service. This was done in General Orders, No. 31, general headquarters, February 16, 1918, wherein the Transportation Service was made a part of the Service of the Rear, the first name for the Services of Supply. A few weeks later it was thought best, however, to coordinate the rail and motor transportation services and construction, and General Orders, No. 31, corrected, were issued March 12, 1918, whereby the name "Service of the Rear" became "Services of Supply" and a Service of Utilities was created, the component parts of which were the Transportation Service, the Motor Transport Service, the Department of Light Railways and Roads, and the Department of Construction and Forestry. The Army Transport Service had been made a department of the Transportation Service on December 8, 1917, the transfer being made by General Orders, No. 78, general headquarters. The Service of Utilities, however, was ended July 11, 1918, by General Orders, No. 114, Headquarters, Services of Supply. By the redistribution of the services under this order the Department of Light Railways and Roads and the Department of Construction and Forestry were charged to the chief engineer, Expeditionary Forces, and the Transportation Service and the Motor Transport Service were made separate departments of the Services of Supply. The railroad and dock organization continued in this relation to the commanding general, Services of Supply, even after the Transportation Corps was organized by General Orders, No. 52, Headquarters, Services of Supply, November 12, 1918.

The internal organization of the Transportation Corps remained fairly constant at headquarters, but the general field organization was evolved only after many months of study and experiment. The director general of transportation was assisted by a deputy director general for general affairs, a deputy director general for the Services of Supply, a deputy director general for the Zone of Advance, and deputy directors general with the



British and French ministries, a business manager, an engineer of construction, a director of the Army Transport Service, and a director of military affairs. The deputy director general for Services of Supply, had charge of' railroad operation within the Services of Supply; the deputy for the Zone of Advance had similar functions within that zone, and the deputies with the British and French ministries were the representatives of the director general with those two governments. The business manager had charge of requisitions, contracts, claims., accounts, and statistics. The engineer of construction designed all railroad and port facilities, and the director of the Army Transport Service had charge of port operations, and the director of military affairs of personnel.

The Transportation Corps had to train most of its enlisted personnel and the greater portion of its junior officers. Out of the draft it should have had all the stevedores, engineers, firemen, conductors, brakemen, yardmasters, and switchmen. Many of these men got away however, to combatant units., and it was only possible to find enough of them in the Expeditionary Forces for five transportation battalions. The recruiting officers in the United States had to accept volunteers at the valuation placed on them by the railroad officials of America and these railroad officials frequently classified switchmen as yardmasters, firemen as engineers, and traffic men as railroad operators. The laborers supplied for the docks knew nothing about stevedoring and had to be trained. The Transportation Corps made hundreds of railroad men and stevedores out of green material. All the time taken to train these men could have been selected through some system whereby their qualifications could have been checked adequately.. The commissioned personnel in the junior grades was in as bad shape. Men were commissioned as stevedores who had no experience. Former Army non-commissioned officers were given the higher grades because they showed up better in camps before the troops went overseas than the technical officers did. The result was that when technical operations began the technical officers did not have sufficient rank to enforce their orders and no promotion was possible for many months.

The Transportation Corps did not operate the French railroads; it operated on them subject to French regulation. The reason for this was obvious. The French railroad traffic was a large part of the business of the roads and only French methods of operation, of which the Americans knew comparatively little, were necessary as long as French personnel was (*sic*) employed. The Americans ran their own trains, but under French regulation. Yard operation for Americans was wholly and entirely American, however. Just before the armistice the French requested the Transportation Corps to take over the Paris-Orleans Railroad entirely and operate it both for the French and the Americans after American methods. Had the war continued, this transfer of entire control of this railroad was to have been effected January 1, 1919."

Colonel William J. Wilgus, an experienced railway executive who served in France as Director of Military Railways and as Deputy Director General of Transportation, recorded his wartime experiences in a volume entitled, Transporting the A.E.F. in Western Europe, 1917-1919. Certain paragraphs from the final chapter of that volume (pp.549-552) will serve to summarize the problems encountered:



"The fact that may be said to stand out above all others is that the United States, when war was declared, was in large part unprepared for the task in transportation that awaited it on the other side. This was true, not only as regards the material needs of warfare and the training of men, in which our unpreparedness was so general; but in a less excusable way it was true of things that called merely for thinking, without attendant heavy expense,

"The eight reorganizations of the Service within sixteen months - an average of one every two months - and the long-drawn-out process of cut and try in the field organization, were the bitter price that was paid for this phase of our unpreparedness. It was not until hostilities were over that the Transportation Service emerged as it had started at the time of the first reorganization, with its head clothed with power, as well as responsibility, in the movement of our troops and supplies by rail and water, including the construction of port and railway facilities needed in that connection, from the coasts of Europe to the firing line: also with its primary unit reduced to the size of a company reporting to a militarized technical commander, as was so obviously necessary where rapid changes in the situation demanded flexibility in the assignment and reassignment of different classes of men, in varied numbers, to a multitude of locations at which the service to be performed was of a strictly technical character.

"In the interim between the birth of the Transportation Service as a separate entity after we had entered the War, and its rebirth nearly a year and a half later, the three leading elements of discord were: (1) the uncertainty as to whom the Army Transport Service, including its European Division, should report; (2) the differences that arose between those who constructed the transportation facilities, and those who designed, and were to use them; and (3) the relations of the Transportation Service to Section Commanders in the Base and Intermediate Sections, and to Regulating Officers and Railhead Officers in the Advance Section.

"The first of these was troublesome while it lasted; but happily it came to an end, in December, 1917, when the question was settled, once for all, by the definite placing of vessel discharge and water operations in Europe under the Director General of Transportation. The second difficulty never was cleared up while hostilities lasted, and to it in large part is to be ascribed the delayed completion of important facilities such as the new ports and locomotive water supply, and the lack of preparedness for a spirited advance at the front. The third bone of contention was the most serious. This was particularly so in the Advance Section in which the responsibility of the Commanding General, Services of Supply, terminated at the Regulating Station, whereas that of his subordinate, the Director General of Transportation, continued unbroken to the standard gauge railheads without authority on his part to enforce his commands except through the medium, and with the consent, of a member of the General Staff at General Headquarters or his representatives in the Advance Section. It was this adoption by our General Staff of what may be termed the French *chef de gare* principle - so foreign to American railway practice and unadapted to railway conditions on the lines of communication of the American Army in France of complete jurisdiction by the local military commander over train and car movements within his bailiwick, in disregard of its



far-reaching effect on train and yard conditions and locomotive and car supply on other parts of the transportation system as a whole, that went far towards bringing about the serious car shortage that came to a head in the fall of 1918. This was particularly the case in the Advance Section. In the Base and Intermediate Sections, what might have been a serious interference with port and railway operations was ameliorated by the requirement of Major General Harbord that any overruling of the instructions of the Director General of Transportation should only be done in writing.

"In so far as transportation is concerned, the conclusion then to be drawn is that we entered the War without a preliminary knowledge of the circumstances under which our forces would be expected to function, and without an army organization suited for war conditions; and that during the year and a half that was taken to overcome this unpreparedness and correct these shortcomings, the Transportation Service was gravely hampered, if not foot-bound. In the end, to repeat what has been said, it came forth free, after the War was over, with a self-contained real war-time organization, in which its head was given power commensurate with his responsibilities; and with its forces, under militarized technical officers fitted by experience to command them, and so grouped as to promote their flexibility for the work in hand."

## TRANSPORTATION ASPECTS OF THE ARMY REORGANIZATION BILL OF 1920

-

In his 1919 report to the Secretary of War, the Chief of Staff stated that a plan for the reorganization of the Army in the light of experience during the war had crystallized, and had been submitted with the recommendation that it be transmitted for the consideration of Congress. This bill provided for a Transportation Corps and a Motor Transport Corps as independent elements of the Army.

Senate Bill 2715, "a bill to reorganize and increase the efficiency of the United States Army, and for other purposes" was introduced on August 4, 1919, by Senator James W. Wadsworth, Jr., upon request of the War Department. In a letter dated August 3, 1919, the Secretary of War described the bill as "the latest form assumed by our studies on this subject in the War Department". The Secretary of War stated, however, that he would not give official approval to the bill until he had consulted General John J. Pershing and his associates, who were still abroad. The bill was read twice, was referred to the Senate Committee on Military Affairs and was the subject of extended hearings during August-December 1919 before a subcommittee. (See the Congressional Record, Vol. 58, Pt. 4, p. 3600).



House Bill 8287, introduced on August 5, 1919, by Mr. Julius Kahn, also was known as "the War Department Bill" and provided for a separate Transportation Corps and a separate Motor Transport Corps. This bill was the subject of extended hearings before the House Committee on Military Affairs, beginning September 3, 1919. It never reached the floor of the House, however, but died in the Committee.

House Bill 11060 was introduced by Mr. Carl Hayden on December 10, 1919. It provided for a Transportation Corps with jurisdiction over the movement of troops and supplies, by all means, including motor transport. The bill was referred to the House Committee on Military Affairs and apparently died there.

House Bill 12775, which was introduced by Mr. Kahn on February 27, 1920, provided for the return of the control of Army transportation to the Quartermaster General. Mr. Kahn evidently adopted this expedient for getting the subject before the House. The bill was referred to the House Committee on Military Affairs, and subsequently was debated on the floor of the House. Two attempts were made to amend it so as to provide for a separate Transportation Service, one by Mr. Charles P. Caldwell on March 10, 1920, and another by Mr. Charles C. Kearns on March 12, 1920. Both amendments were promptly rejected. (See the Congressional Record, Vol. 59, Pt. 4, 4137-4138, 4240-4249).

#### Hearings on S. 2715.

In submitting Senate Bill 2715, which provided for a separate Transportation Corps and a separate Motor Transport Corps, Senator Wadsworth made it clear that he was not committed to support the bill and had introduced it only "in a ministerial capacity". The principal arguments put forward during the hearing pertained to the question whether transportation would be more economically and more efficiently handled as a separate Corps than as part of the Quartermaster Corps.

Brigadier General Frank T. Hines, Chief of Transportation Service, testified at length and strongly supported the idea of an independent Transportation Corps. He outlined the advantages, in the light of his experience during the war. "Personally", he said, "I believe it would be a great mistake to permit the organization which has accomplished what the transportation service has accomplished during the war, to revert back and be scattered among the bureaus of the War Department as it was originally". He pointed out that it naturally would not be necessary to continue the large operating force in time of peace, which had been required in time of war. (Published Hearings, pp. 231-52).

General John Pershing expressed the opinion that it would be "in the interest of efficiency, and it would also avoid duplication of overhead expense, to have a Transportation Corps which would include all classes of transportation, rail, water, motor transport and animal-drawn transportation". General Pershing saw no serious objection to placing transportation in a supply service in time of peace, but he emphasized that in the time of war "it would have to be an independent organization". (p. 1573).



General Peyton C. March, Chief of Staff, favored keeping the Transportation Corps and the Motor Transport Corps separate. "We found," he said, "very early in our experience in France that it was necessary to consolidate the motor transport corps in one unit and the transportation corps under a separate unit." (p. 85) Honorable Newton D. Baker, Secretary of War, thought that the Transportation Corps and the Motor Transport Corps should be separate in time of war, but that in a peacetime establishment "undoubtedly one person could handle both". (p.175). Senator Sutherland observed that it should be possible to put the two services as separate branches under one general head.

#### Hearings on H.R. 8287.

General March in his statement before the House Committee on Military Affairs said that during World War I "it became perfectly evident that the inland and water transportation problem, the sending of several million men to the seacoast over the land lines and the problem of getting them across to the other side, required a separate department for itself, just as every other Army among our allies had to have a separate department for those purposes". General March again expressed the view that a consolidation of motor with the other forms of transportation under one administration would prove unwieldy. (Published hearings, pp. 64-65).

Major General James W. McAndrew, Commandant, General Staff College, did not favor a separate Motor Transport Corps, but believed all transportation should be under a single head. (p. 282). Major General William G. Haan, Director, War Plans Division, General Staff Corps, agreed with General McAndrew, for he believed it would be much simpler and would involve less overhead to have a single transportation service. (p. 352) Brigadier General Charles P. Drake, Chief, Motor Transport Corps, on the other hand, considered a separate Motor Transport Corps necessary in time of war and believed that it should be separate in time of peace to obviate the delay involved in setting it up separately after the outbreak of hostilities. (p. 633).

Brigadier General Frank T. Hines again in these hearings argued strongly for a complete and independent Transportation Service, including rail, motor, water and animal-drawn transport. He contended that an organization and skeleton force should be maintained in time of peace which could be readily expanded in time of war. In his opinion this comprehensive transportation organization "would result in a material reduction of overhead". He believed that the trend in France had been towards a single transportation service. (p. 995)

#### Debate on H.R. 12775.

As indicated above, House Bill 12775 proposed to recommit transportation to the Quartermaster General, and two amendments which were proposed with a view to creating a separate Transportation Corps were voted down. Mr. Caldwell, who introduced one of the amendments, inserted a memorandum in the Congressional Record (Vol. 59, Pt. 4, pp. 4241-45). in the course of which he said that the Quartermaster Corps "has interests of its own and has not the time nor the facility nor



the inclination to give to the transportation of the Army, its men, its supplies, and its materiel that ought to be given to it, and that can be obtained only by putting this in a separate corps". Mr. Kearns, who offered the other amendment, argued that his proposal would create no extra office and no extra officers, and stressed the support given to the idea of a separate transportation organization by General Pershing and other high military officers. Mr. Oliver argued that a Transportation Corps was needed to develop the inland waterways. (p. 4247).

Opposition to a separate Transportation Corps was expressed in the course of the debate by Mr. Daniel R. Anthony of Kansas, Mr. Tom Connally of Texas, and Mr. Percy E. Quinn of Mississippi. Mr. Anthony spoke frequently against a separate Transportation Corps for reasons of economy; he remarked that at a given military post, a Quartermaster could handle transportation as well as other necessary work; he stressed the fact that transportation had been under the Quartermaster General for over a hundred years. Mr. Connally argued that, "If you have two corps established, one for transportation and one for supplies, they will be continually passing the buck to one another". Mr. Quinn commented, "When you create a separate bureau you provide for a lot of typewriters, a big drove of messengers, and every kind of expense you can imagine".

From the experience of H.R. 12775 on the floor of the House it was fairly clear that there was small possibility of obtaining legislation to establish a separate Transportation Corps, including or excluding motor transport. Two conferences were held to harmonize the pending Senate Bill 2715 and H. R. 12775, which are covered respectively by House reports 1000 and 1049, 66th Congress, 2nd Session. The latter report contains this observation: "As to the Staff Departments, there was no material difference between the two bills except as to the services of construction and transportation. The House bill had continued both of these services in the Quartermaster Corps, where they were before the war. The Senate Bill established separate branches for each of these two services. The conferees adopted the provisions of the House Bill". (p. 64).

The result was Public Law 242, June 4, 1920, generally known as the Army Reorganization Bill, under which transportation was included among the responsibilities of the Quartermaster General. (See U. S. Statutes at Large, Vol. 41, Pt. 1, v. 759, et seq., and for transportation note Section 9, p. 766).

In the Report of the Chief of Transportation Service to the Secretary of War, 1920, General Hines had the following to say by way of valedictory: (p. 63)

"One of the outstanding organic readjustments of the War Department which was necessary before the more energetic prosecution of the World War became practicable was the separation of the functions of military transportation from other departmental activities into a totally independent bureau. Almost simultaneously and under similar necessity an analogous reorganization of the American Expeditionary Forces was made. From these two facts it may be logically deduced that an independent



transportation organization is an essential concomitant of modern warfare and must be provided for in any future military campaign of an extensive nature.

The Army reorganization act as approved June 5, 1920, failed, despite the recommendations of the War Department and of military experts in every branch of the service, to make provision for the permanent establishment of the transportation organization built up during the war. It is, nevertheless, believed that a careful and scientific analysis of the lessons of the World War, such as has been recommended, and which study may now be more leisurely undertaken, will demonstrate beyond question the need for such an organization. In this connection it is respectfully submitted that the War Department exists primarily for the national defense and that no function of the department, certainly not so important a one as transportation, should be handicapped by an organization which, although acceptable under normal peace-time conditions, is inherently unsuited for the stress of war."

## TRANSPORTATION UNDER THE QUARTERMASTER GENERAL

### JULY 1920 – MARCH 1942

Pursuant to Act of Congress approved June 4, 1920, a War Department directive was issued ordering transfer of the Transportation Service and Motor Transport Service (also the Construction Division and the Real Estate Service) to the Quartermaster Corps, effective July 15, 1920.<sup>9</sup> The directive stated (Sec. III, 3): "The Transportation Service shall be organized and operated as a separate service of the Quartermaster Corps and shall be charged with the transportation of the Army by land and water including transportation of troops and supplies by mechanical or animal means, and with the furbishing of means of transportation of all classes and kinds required by the Army". This statement of function is in the exact language of the Act.

Pursuant to this directive, the Quartermaster General issued a circular which employed substantially the same phraseology, but charged the Transportation Service also "with the repair and maintenance of such means of transportation, obtaining the necessary materials and supplies by requisition on the Supply Service (animals excepted, which will be obtained from the Remount Service), and the control of funds covering such activities".<sup>10</sup> This circular stated that the Transportation Service was divided into the following units:

Administrative Division

Animal Transport Division

Motor Transport Division

Rail Transport Division



## Water Transport Division

A memorandum issued by the Quartermaster General in August 1921 listed the "general functions of the Transportation Service" as follows:<sup>11</sup>

- (a) Is charged with the transportation of the Army by land and water, including the operation of terminal facilities
- (b) Is charged with the transportation of troops, supplies, animals, by mechanical and animal means.
- (c) Is charged with furnishing means of transportation of all classes and kinds required by the Army
- (d) Is charged with the repair and maintenance of means of transportation
- (e) Is charged with control of funds allotted to the Transportation Service
- (f) Is in charge of training of personnel for the Transportation Service
- (g) Prepares war plans for the Transportation Service
- (h) Compiles and prepares history of the Transportation Service
- (i) Has charge of mail and records of the Transportation Service
- (j) Collects and compiles statistics on transportation matters
- (k) Prepares tables of organization and tables of basic allowances, equipment and occupational requirements for organization and personnel of the Transportation Service
- (l) Computes requirements for the Transportation Service
- (m) Procures and operates marine vessels
- (n) Operates and maintains railroads except such as may be specifically allocated to the Ordnance Department and Engineer Corps
- (o) Executes contracts pertaining to the Transportation Service
- (p) Is charged with the storage and issue of motor vehicles and parts and motor machinery pertaining to the Transportation Service

The above –mentioned memorandum of August 1921, disclosed a new War Planning Division in the Transportation Service set-up. According to an order issued by the



Quartermaster General in March 1922, the designation of the new unit was changed to Planning Division: in addition to a War Planning Branch, it had a Requirements Branch and a Training Branch.<sup>12</sup>

By June 1930 the designation Transportation Service had given way to Transportation Division, which embraced a Motor Transport Branch, a Rail Transport Branch and a Water Transport Branch; according to the order each of these Branches was to be 'self-contained' and 'so organized as to permit of its being set up as a separate Division at any time;' the functions of the discontinued Administrative Branch were absorbed by the remaining branches; the planning function apparently was absorbed by the Administrative Division, OQMG, which had a War Planning and Training Branch; what remained of the animal transport function presumably was taken over by the Remount Branch of the Supply Division.<sup>13</sup> In January 1937 the designation Rail Transport Branch was changed to Commercial Traffic Branch.<sup>14</sup>

The outbreak of the war in Europe, then, found the Transportation Division organized into three Branches, namely, Motor Transport, Water Transport, and Commercial Traffic. On July 26, 1940, the motor transport activity, which had grown very rapidly, was taken out of the Transportation Division and set up as the Motor Transport Division.<sup>15</sup> In August 1940, the Acting Chief, Transportation Division, proposed adding to the Water Transport Branch and Commercial Traffic Branch, an Administrative Branch, an Investigations Branch (to handle investigations, claims, contracts and other legal matters), a Troop Movement Control Branch, and a Freight and Cargo Control Branch. The Quartermaster General approved the plan 'when, and if, a greater effort than at present is brought into being.'<sup>16</sup> He pointed out that there was little chance of assigning to the Transportation Division additional Regular Army Officers, and recommended that a search for competent Reserve Officers be undertaken.

The proposed expansion, with modifications, was finally authorized in February 1941.<sup>17</sup> A. Legal Section had been set up informally in November 1940; it became the Investigations Branch in February 1941, and shortly thereafter was redesignated the Research and Review Branch. An Administrative Branch was announced on February 18, 1941.<sup>18</sup> The Troop Movement Control Branch and Freight and Cargo Control Branch, which had been envisaged as agencies to exercise eventually complete control of War Department traffic, were not activated, but instead, a Traffic Control Branch was established in April 1941, which functioned only as a planning and coordinating agency.<sup>19</sup> As of July 1, 1941, the Design and Construction Section of the Water Transport Branch was set up separately as the Marine Design, Construction and Procurement Branch.<sup>20</sup>

During the remaining eight months that the Transportation Division functioned as a unit of the Office of the Quartermaster General, there were no further changes in the basic organization. Naturally, there was a great expansion of activity during this period, accompanied by an increase of personnel and reorganizations within the branches. Such reorganizations are not within the scope of this writing, except as they may bear



upon a number of functional developments which will be dealt with in the following paragraphs.

Provision for war planning was made in the transportation organization for a period of years following the termination of World War I. This was a natural result of the unhappy experience of the Army in respect to transportation during the war, due to lack of planning. As has been noted, the Transportation Service under General Hines had a War Plans Branch in the Administrative Division. In August 1921 the Quartermaster General's Transportation Service had a War Planning Division. In March of the following year the Transportation Service had a Planning Division which included a War Planning Branch. In an office order issued in April 1923, the Quartermaster General listed among the duties of the Transportation Service: " . . . prepares and keeps up-to-date plans for the WAR-TIME EXPANSION of the TRANSPORTATION SERVICE. This responsibility is UNDIVIDED." By June 1930, however, the war planning unit had been dropped from the transportation organization, then called Transportation Division.

No explanation has been found of the elimination of the war planning unit from the Quartermaster General's transportation organization. In part, no doubt, it resulted from the continued pressure for economy, and in part it may have been due to the inclusion of transportation in the industrial mobilization planning which was being fostered by the Assistant Secretary for War in accordance with the responsibility expressly imposed upon him by the Act of June 4, 1920. In his annual report for the fiscal year 1925, the Secretary of War spoke of the progress which had been made in planning for industrial mobilization, and mentioned prominently plans for the control of transportation in case of an emergency. Judging from this and subsequent annual reports, these preparations were limited to arrangements for collaboration with the railways, and with such transportation agencies as the Interstate Commerce Commission, Federal Waterways Corporation and the American Railway Association. This phase of planning was pushed much further in the 1930's, particularly after the evidence of an approaching crisis in Europe began to multiply. It was at all times confined to the mobilization resources, and did not embrace technical research and development to provide improved and specialized types of land and water transportation for war purposes.

Under the War Department directive issued pursuant to the Act of June 4, 1920, the Transportation Service was charged with furnishing the 'means of transportation of all classes and kinds required by the Army'.<sup>21</sup> This procurement responsibility was distributed to the several divisions dealing respectively with animal-drawn, motor, water and rail transportation. As has been noted, jurisdiction over animal-drawn and motor transportation eventually passed from the transportation unit. Procurement of floating equipment was handled in the Water Transport Division and its successor, the Water Transport Branch until 1941, when this function was transferred to a new Marine Design, Construction and Procurement Branch. The Rail Transport Division, later known as the Commercial Traffic Branch, did the planning and controlled the funds for the procurement of utility railway equipment, but the contracts were let through the Corps of Engineers, whose responsibility it was to procure equipment for the Military Railway Service.



The functions of the Transportation Service as defined in the Quartermaster General's Office memorandum of August 30, 1921, referred to above, included the training of personnel and the preparation of tables of organization, and "tables of basic allowances, equipment and occupational requirements." As of that date the Transportation Service included a Training Branch in its Administrative Division. In March 1922 the Training Branch was in the Planning Division. As of June 2, 1930, when a new organizational memorandum was issued, the transportation organization had discontinued its training unit, and this function appears to have been lodged in the Administrative Division, OQMG. During the period between the wars the Quartermaster Corps maintained a number of schools, but only one was directly concerned with transportation. That was the Motor Transport School, organized in 1917 to train officers and enlisted men for duty with the various motor transport units which were being organized at Camp Holabird, and since the war concerned with "the training of officers and enlisted men, from various Arms and Services, in the technical and practical work necessary in maintaining and operating the motor transportation of the Army at large".<sup>22</sup>

Reference has been made to the Quartermaster General's instruction in 1930 that the Motor Transport Water Transport and Commercial Traffic Branches of the Transportation Division each be "self-contained" and "so organized as to permit of its being set up as a separate Division at any time".<sup>23</sup> Each branch accordingly set up its own machinery for handling matters relating to finances, personnel and statistics. When, in 1940, the Motor Transport Branch became the Motor Transport Division, it benefited by this arrangement. Otherwise the principle of self-containment became a considerable bone of contention. The reorganization of the Transportation Division, which was undertaken in the summer of 1941 because of its greatly increased responsibilities, provided for an Administrative Branch coordinate with the Water Transport and Commercial Traffic Branches, but found the latter very reluctant to give up the direct handling of administrative matters. In fact, control of some of these matters was not completely centralized until after the general reorganization of transportation in March 1942.

The Chief of Staff in his report for 1919 noted that at the time of our entry into World War I, and for some months thereafter, each of the Army supply bureaus, having its own transportation machinery, to a considerable extent acted independently of the Quartermaster General in making shipments. (p. 160). During 1941, when the supply arms and services were under great pressure to effect deliveries, there was a tendency in this direction, but it was held in check by constant vigilance on the part of the Quartermaster General and vigorous defense of his prerogatives by G-4.<sup>24</sup> In the spring of 1941 the Chief of Engineers proposed that he be allowed to effect his own transportation arrangements for the delivery of construction personnel and materials to the new Caribbean bases, but was denied this authority upon strong recommendation of G-4. Following the establishment of the Army Air Forces in June 1941, when consideration was being given to the transfer of functions from the War Department General Staff to the new Air Staff, G-4 strongly recommended against the transfer of any functions pertaining to the actual transportation of troops and supplies, and this recommendation prevailed so far as the period covered by this monograph is



concerned.<sup>25</sup> A concession was made to the Ordnance Department in that blanket routings were given by the Quartermaster General to cover shipments of a recurring nature from arsenals and depots, thus relieving the Ordnance Department of the necessity of obtaining a routing for each shipment. Such blanket routings, however, were always under observation and subject to revision or recall, so that the arrangement, even if outside the letter, did not compromise the spirit of the regulation.

Throughout this period the transportation operation of the Quartermaster General were subject to the supervision of the Supply Division (G-4) of the General Staff. During the peace period, when these operations were largely routine, the staff supervision appears to have been of a similar nature. After the outbreak of war in Europe, however, Army transportation entered a period of rapid expansion and the transportation situation throughout the world became critical. Under these circumstances the Assistant Chief of Staff, G-4, took a progressively more active part in planning and eventually in directing transportation operations. During 1941 the Transportation Branch of G-4 built up a considerable staff, with separate sections to deal with water, rail, motor and air traffic. Three months after the United States entered the war, that is to say in March 1942, transportation was taken out of the Quartermaster Corps and placed in the hands of a new organization, the Transportation Service in the newly created Services of Supply.

Thus the experience of World War I was repeated in certain respects; but there were two important differences. First, the withdrawal of transportation from the Quartermaster Corps was made promptly and completely in World War II whereas the process had been a gradual one in 1917-18, and became the Transportation Corps in July of that year. Second, transportation was not set up on the staff level as in the earlier emergency, but was made coordinate with the existing supply or technical services. Aside from practical considerations, the latter arrangement was in line with the will of Congress, expressly incorporated in the National Defense Act (Sec. 5), that members of the General Staff Corps should be confined strictly to the discharge of duties of the general nature outlined for it and not be permitted to engage in work pertaining to other bureaus or offices of the War Department.

#### **FOOTNOTE PAGE**

<sup>1</sup> W.D. General Orders No. 102

<sup>2</sup> W.D. General Orders No. 167, December 28, 1917

<sup>3</sup> Office Order No. 135, Office of the Acting Quartermaster General

<sup>4</sup> W.D. General Order No. 36, April 16, 1918

<sup>5</sup> Office Order No. 380, OQMG, April 22, 1918; see also W.D. General Orders No. 52, May 25, 1918



<sup>6</sup> Office Order No. 464, OQMG

<sup>7</sup> Supply Circular No. 21, Purchase, Storage and Traffic Division, March 11, 1918

<sup>8</sup> Supply Circular No. 28, PSTD, April 9, 1919, and W.D. General Orders No. 54 April 21, 1919

<sup>9</sup> W.D. General Orders No. 42, July 14, 1920. The same directive created an Inland and Coastwise Waterway Service in the War Department and assigned Brigadier General Frank T. Hines as the Chief of that Service.

<sup>10</sup> OQMG Circular No. 11, July 28, 1920

<sup>11</sup> OQMG Office Memo No. 119, August 30, 1921

<sup>12</sup> OQMG Office Order No. 25, March 10, 1922

<sup>13</sup> OQMG Office Order No. 22, June 2, 1930

<sup>14</sup> OQMG Office Order No. 4, January 7, 1937

<sup>15</sup> OQMG Office Order No. 49

<sup>16</sup> Memorandum from Gregory, the Quartermaster General, to Cordiner, Acting Chief, Transportation Division, August 14, 1940.

<sup>17</sup> Transportation Division Memorandum No. 2, February 5, 1941, and OQMG Office Order No. 25-D, February 21, 1941

<sup>18</sup> Transportation Division Office Memorandum No. 5

<sup>19</sup> Transportation Division Office Memorandum No. 22, April 28, 1941

<sup>20</sup> Transportation Division Office Memorandum No. 25, July 1, 1941

<sup>21</sup> W.D. General Orders No. 42, July 14, 1920

<sup>22</sup> Annual Report of the Quartermaster General, Fiscal Year 1931, (p. 8).

<sup>23</sup> OQMG Office Order No. 22, June 2, 1930

<sup>24</sup> Memorandum, G-4 to WPD, April 3, 1941, File G-4/32834

<sup>25</sup> See W.D Circular No. 6 IVe, January 9, 1942



